

CATHOLIC THEATRE

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Children's Theatre USA Is Born

by SISTER MARY HONORA, O.P.

This "museum sketch" is a condensation of a chapter from the writer's graduate thesis, "An Introductory Study Of Theory and Practice In Children's Theatre USA."

The time is 1903. The place lies between the Bowery and the East River in lower New York City. Some 500,000 Polish, Russian, and Jewish immigrants comprise the teeming populace of this circumscribed area. Each week, hundreds more, seeking their fortunes, join the mass of humanity.

Standing foursquare at East Broadway and Jefferson Streets, in the center of this community—larger than the city of Baltimore at the time—is an imposing structure called simply THE EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE. Fifteen years earlier, Jewish charity had built it and put it there. Dedicated to the task of Americanizing the thousands of South European immigrants who used its facilities, the Alliance administrators were managing to serve all needs save that of adequate, wholesome amusement.

It was at this time that Alice Minnie Herts filled a vacancy on the Entertainment Committee of the Alliance. Little is to be discovered about this unusual woman except that she was of Jewish extraction; that she had studied extensively at the Comedie Francaise; that she had helped to found the Normal College Settlement of New York City.

But in the six brief years that she was to spend as a charity worker at the Alliance, Alice Herts was to revolutionize the entertainment program; she was to give to the exponents of Progressive education a practical demonstration of the ancient Horatian principle that "you will better discover the natural bent of the child if you make his education a sort of amusement"; she was to give to American theatre its lustiest, bawlingest baby.

And then, when life seemed to hold within her very reach the fruition of all her dreams, she was to see her theatre closed by the Sunday Laws; she was to see her work taken over by her closest associate, Emma Sheridan Fry, from whom bitter professional differences had caused a previous separation; she was to suffer a painful nervous collapse; she was to make a magnificent comeback to teach her methods at Columbia University's Teachers' College and to supervise the dramatized reading program in the elementary schools of New York City.

ALLIANCE ADMINISTRATION

Alice Herts' first move was to prevail upon the Alliance Administration to bring from uptown New York skilled theatre artists and musicians to give programs for the young folks at the Alliance.

But despite the fact that the Administration saw the enthusiastic response to fine, cultural entertainment, it was unable to finance a series of professional programs. More regrettable than that, however, was the fact that the Administration simply could not understand why the type of entertainment—haphazard staging, ill-trained amateurs, or fifth-rate professionals, and mediocre or poor plays—which had heretofore attracted the young folks, should suddenly become inadequate. Therefore, upon deaf ears fell Miss Herts' insistence upon "good plays, correctly mounted, costumed, and artistically performed to make every possible response to the clamorous cry of the child's imagination."

The Alliance, therefore, agreed to supply the stage and the auditorium; from there on, Alice Herts was on her own.

Accordingly, Alice Herts set about organizing her theatre. She engaged as teacher of dramatics Emma Sheridan Fry, an accomplished actress and playwright. She sent notices to the public schools in the area that children who were will-

(Continued on page twelve.)

COLLEGE CALL BOARD

ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCES

The Saint Louis University Theatre will again present a season of drama replete with variety in production style, and leaning towards the lighter vein of comedy.

The opening production of the year, Dalton Trumbo's *The Biggest Thief in Town*, has been variously described as "merrily macabre," "gay and grim," and "comedy of cadavers." It is the story of a small town undertaker who is so intent on getting the business of embalming the local millionaire that he steals the body, only to find out that the mogul, in addition to being quite alive, is outlandishly in debt.

Though this play was quite successful in London and in its pre-Broadway run in the U. S., Broadway critics on the whole received it rather poorly. While it was almost unanimously agreed by the critics that the play was funny, the principle objection seemed to be the light-heartedness with which the production viewed death.

The University, in presenting this play, followed its policy of offering the community not merely "warmed over Broadway" or past successes which have worn themselves out in this area, but worthwhile drama which for some reason or another will in all probability never be presented here professionally.

The Trumbo play opened the season on October 26, 27, and 28. It will be followed on Dec. 7, 8, and 9, by J. B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls*. *You Can't Take It With You*, popular comedy by Kaufman and Hart, will be the first attraction of the Spring semester on March 15, 16, and 17. The season will end on April 26, 27, and 28, with the annual Shakespeare production, this year his satire on courting traditions, *Much Ado About Nothing*.

In addition to the four faculty-directed major productions, the Speech Department of the University is planning to offer two full length student-directed dramas on this season's bill. The directors of these productions, which have not as yet been announced, will be members of the "Onstage Club" (the dramatics organization of the University) who have displayed high scholastic achievement and a particularly fine aptitude in theatrical activities.

The director of each production will be chosen by the officers of the organization together with the faculty.

The "Onstage Club" got off to a fine start in this new season by sponsoring open-house for the freshmen of the University during the University's annual Freshmen Week celebration. The highlight of the party was a production of Philip Moeller's one-act play *Helena's Husband*.

The Speech Department of the University opened its drive for new membership in the N.C.T.C. at the first meeting of the "Onstage Club" on October 4. In accordance with the policy adopted, student membership in N.C.T.C. is required of all active members of the club.

A SHAVIAN COMEDY IS CHOICE

Variety in productions for the coming year keynotes the plans of the Drama Department of The College of St. Teresa, Kansas City, Missouri. Sister M. Felice, Drama Director, has selected G. B. Shaw's comedy, *You Never Can Tell*, for the fall production. This domestic comedy set in a London seaside resort of 1896 will have a two-night run, November 17-18.

The Last of the Leprechauns, an original fairy tale written by Sister Marcella Marie, with music by Sister de LaSalle, both faculty members of the College, will be presented as the ninth annual children's play. There will be four performances, February 19-22, for the elementary school children of the community.

For the spring production, *Song of the Scaffold*, has been chosen. This is Emmet Lavery's dramatization of Gertrud von le Fort's narrative of the Carmelite Sisters at Compeigne during the French Revolution.

An evening of one-act plays will conclude the season. These plays will be written by students in the Playwriting Class and directed by students in the Drama Department.

TO PRESENT "CINDERELLA"

Ursuline Academy and College, Paola, Kansas, will present *Cinderella* by Charlotte Chorpenning on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, November 3, 4, and 5. The production is under the direction of Sister Mary Stephen, O.S.U.

VICTORIA REGINA

The Speech and Drama Department of the College of St. Mary of the Springs, Columbus, Ohio, will present *Merry Masquers*, campus Dramatic Club, in Laurence Housman's *Victoria Regina* on November 3 and 4. The production—in space staging—will be given in ten scenes. Sister Elizabeth Seton, O.P., is directing.

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REGIONAL REPORTS

NORTH CENTRAL REGION: Chairman Sister Mary Charitas, C.S.J., reporting—Mount Marty High School, Mount Marty, South Dakota, will hold the Drama Festival at Mount Marty College on November 5. The Critic-Judge will be Sister Mary Immaculata, O.S.B., of Benedictine Heights College, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Sister Mary Jeanne, O.S.B., is Drama Festival Chairman.

The Catholic One-act Drama Festival for the Twin City area, will be held again this year at St. Joseph's Academy, St. Paul, Minnesota, on November 24. The Critic-Judge will be Mr. Charles Costello, Davenport, Iowa. Sister Irenaeus, C.S.J., has been named Festival Chairman.

* * *

WEST CENTRAL REGION: Representative Sister Martin de Porres, O.S.F., reporting—October 11, twenty-five members and potential members of NCTC attended a luncheon-meeting at Duchesne College, Omaha. The purpose of the meeting was to arouse interest in Catholic Theatre in the area and was most successful. Father Robert Neenan, S.J., outlined the objectives of NCTC and presented Sister Mary Jean and Mr. Conal Furay who acquainted the group with activities planned for the area.

November 10, Cathedral High School, Omaha, will be host at the first annual Director's Day. Three schools, Cathedral High—Conal Furay, director, St. Joseph's High, Omaha—Sister M. Cordula, and Guardian Angels High—Sister M. Martin de Porres, will present the same one-act play, after which a panel of three other local dramatic coaches will discuss the interpretations of the play. Mr. Harry Langdon, member of Creighton University's speech department will present his views on the interpretations and add his own.

Officers of the National Catholic Theatre Conference, Nebraska Area were elected after the regional convention last March. They are: President: Rev. Robert P. Neenan, S.J., Creighton University, Omaha; Vice-President: Sister Mary Jean, R.S.M., College of Saint Mary, Omaha; Secretary: Mr. Conal Furay, Cathedral High, Omaha; Treasurer: Mother Dorothy Clark, R.S.C.J., Duchesne College, Omaha.

St. Louis Area: Sister M. Celestine, C.P.P.S., Bishop DuBourg High School, St. Louis, reporting—The final meeting of the St. Louis NCTC group was held on September 22, at Rosati-Kain High School. Directors and representatives from the following schools were present: Notre Dame High School of St. Louis, St. Louis University High, Rosati-Kain High, St. Joseph Academy, St. Francis Xavier High, St. Anthony High, Bishop DuBourg High, Mercy

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When ordering from our advertisers, be sure to mention Catholic Theatre Conference.

Profile

(Editor's Note: This is the second of a series of "thumbnail sketches" of the folks who guide the destinies of our NCTC, having taken office at Notre Dame University, at the 1955 convention, and continuing in office until June, 1957.)

BROTHER DUNSTAN, C.S.C.

Brother Dunstan, C.S.C., Notre Dame High School, Sherman Oaks, California, has been working in the field of dramatics for the past 18 years. He got his start at Cathedral High School, Indianapolis, Indiana, under the direction of Brother Hilarion, C.S.C., and Brother Francis Borgia, C.S.C. Brother Dunstan was initiated into the trade when he was told that he would direct and stage the various dance routines for *New Moon* and the following year for Chadman's *Golden Trail*.

After two years at Cathedral High School he returned to the University of Notre Dame and took his Bachelor Degree in Education and his Masters Degree in English.

He came to California in 1942 and at the instigation of the senior class of that year he wrote the dialogue and lyrics for his first successful musical comedy, *Stars Over Hollycrest*. The following year he wrote a successful full length drama *American Living Room*; this was followed the next year by a philosophical play called *It Happened Here*. The following year he went back to the idea of a musical show and turned up with *The Princess of Tallenburg*, a musical based on the best tunes of Johann Strauss. Thereafter there followed a long succession of plays: *Passport to Heaven*, *Great Aunt Trilby*, *Strangers in Our Midst*, an hour radio version of *Romeo and Juliet*, and a whole succession of one act plays.

His first one act play *Best Laid Plans* won high acclaim at the Los Angeles Diocesan Play Festival. Another one act *Now or Never* won first place at the Los Angeles Drama Festival as well as a Superior rating at the PASADENA PLAYHOUSE. His play *And Upon Our Children* won first place in the Archdiocesan Drama Festival. This past year Brother has succeeded in taking top honors with a new play called *Without The Light*. This play was first place winner at the Archdiocesan Drama Festival, the C.Y.O. Drama Festival, and the Pasadena Playhouse One Act Play Tournament.

Perhaps his most successful shows have been extravaganzas which make use of a gymnasium. *If Jack Were Only Here*, musical comedy of the 1890's, and *Go Mac Go*, a musical comedy version of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, have been his biggest undertakings, each involving a cast of some 200 boys.

Brother Dunstan writes his own shows, and does the direction on the dialogue and dance routines.

A profile of Brother Dunstan would be incomplete if we did not include his direct, enthusiastic appreciation of the Catholic school drama teacher's dilemma: How to produce good theatre without a theatre?

(Continued on page eleven.)

MOUNT MARY CONVENTION CHALLENGES CENTRAL REGIONAIRES

Better than 300 NCTC delegates to the Central Region Convention at Mount Mary College, Milwaukee, October 5 and 6, found the program a stimulating sendoff to a new season of Catholic theatre. Keynoting the weekend activities was Rev. Cornelius Crowley, CSB, of Assumption University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada, with a "fireball" address which he entitled "Satisfaction or Self-Satisfaction: A Comment on Catholic Theatre."*

There followed a fine session in Choral Speaking by Agnes Currant Hamm, assisted by Sister Lenore, SSND and the Notre Dame Candidates; a very different session presented as a lecture recital by Dr. Loren Okey of the University of Michigan a rewarding symposium on the Designer—his role and responsibility to theatre, by Mr. Gerald Ritholz of United Scenic Artists of America and Mr. William Foser of Wilding Motion Pictures, Chicago. Mr. Robert Freidel, Drama Supervisor of the Department of Recreation of Milwaukee presented the Milwaukee Players in a demonstration of the techniques of training used in this community theatre group in the preparations of its actors.

Play-wise, delegates were treated to an interesting production of *Pullman Car Hiawatha*, presented by Sister Mary Judine's students from Saint Benedict High in Chicago; to a visually exquisite production of Calderon de la Barca's Spanish morality play, *The World Is A Stage*, offered by Sister Thomas More's class in the Performing Arts at Edgewood High in Madison. A Mount Mary Quartette, easy to look at and listen to, all done up in costumes to watch, did the top lyrics from the much-discussed "Complaining Angel" of Notre Dame U.

And just about the time that the delegates had decided that convention-wise, hospitality-wise, entertainment-wise, inspiration-wise, the weekend was "IT," Mount Mary came forth that the absolute climax—their magnificent production of *Anastasia*. Who could have asked for more?

Co-Chairmen Sister Mary Roman, SSND, and Miss Anna Helen Reuter, of Chicago, together with their smooth-working committee and their gracious Co-Ordinator Sister Mary Hyacinth, SSND, Head of the Drama department at Mount Mary, surely deserved all the kudos tossed to them by the NCTC-ers who had spent the weekend at the beautiful Milwaukee school.

To Sister Mary John Francis, SSND, President of Mount Mary, and to all the members of the college Faculty, NCTC is most grateful—for the splendid facilities, for the "homey" atmosphere, for the flawless diningroom service, for the whole happy weekend in the most enjoyable of Milwaukee October weather.

(*Because Father Crowley's address ought to be shared with all of you, your Bulletin Editors have requested it for publication.)

NCTC College section held a key spot on the recent Mount Mary College Central Region convention. Father Johnston, S.J., Head of the Drama department at St. Louis U. and Vice-President of NCTC, presided at two meetings with college representatives to continue the work on the NCTC College Drama Fraternity organization begun at Chicago last Spring. Results of these deliberations will soon be made available to all college groups in the Conference.

The Central Regional Convention

OCTOBER 5 and 6, 1956

at

MOUNT MARY COLLEGE

2900 W. Menomonee River Drive

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

CONVENTION PROGRAM

Friday, October 5:

5:00-7:00 P.M. Registration—Notre Dame Hall.

Buffet Dinner—Caroline Hall.

7:30 P.M. Opening Session—College Theatre.

Addresses of Welcome:

Sister M. John Francis, SSND, President Mount Mary College.

Sister M. Angelita, BVM, President, NCTC, Immaculate Conception Academy, Davenport, Iowa.

Invocation: Rev. Karl Schroeder, Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa.

Keynote Address: SATISFACTION OR SELF-SATISFACTION: A COMMENT ON CATHOLIC THEATRE.

Rev. Cornelius P. Crowley, CSB, Assumption University of Windsor, Canada.

8:30 P.M. COMMUNITY THEATRE TRAINS ITS PLAYERS: Demonstration by the Milwaukee Players of the Department of Municipal Recreation.

Directed by Robert E. Freidel, Drama Supervisor. Assistants: Dance—Ethel Koch. Music—Otto J. Didio. Accompanists—Mrs. Elizabeth Burdich and Kenneth Krueger.

Chairman of Session: Sister M. Hyacinth, SSND, Mount Mary College.

Saturday morning, October 6:

9:00 A.M. Special Session—Student Lounge, Notre Dame Hall, NCTC College Drama Fraternity Meeting.

Chairman: Rev. Robert A. Johnston, S.J., St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo.

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Hillyer College Announces . . .

Edgar Kloten will direct the new Theatre Workshop of Hillyer College in Hartford, Conn., it was recently announced by President Alan S. Wilson.

Mr. Kloten is joining the newly created Department of Speech and Drama under the chairmanship of Prof. John Balmer to direct the drama activities and to assist in developing a College-Community Theatre for the Hartford area.

Mr. Kloten served as staff director of the Ivy Tower Playhouse in Spring Lake, N. J. this past summer and was Managing-Director of the new Wagon Wheel Theatre in Rockton, Ill. during its first season in 1955-56. For several years he was on the staff of Fordham University as Chairman of the Theatre Division and Director of the University Theatre.

Plans for the Theatre Workshop include a production of a new play "Tears for Ulysses" by Mildred Core and an original musical as yet untitled. Eugene O'Neill's comedy "Ah, Wilderness!" and "Libel" by Edward Wooten are also on the schedule.

Recent Appointments

Reverend Gabriel Stapleton, S.D.S., Mother of the Saviour Seminary Blackwood, New Jersey, and Robert Smett, Catholic Courier Journal, Rochester, New York, are Co-chairmen of the MID-ATLANTIC REGION.

Mother M. Camillus, O.S.U., Academy of Mount Saint Ursula, New York City and the Reverend John Leonard, S.J., Fordham University are Co-chairmen of the New York Archdiocese.

Sister M. Celestine, C.P.P.S., Bishop DuBourg High School, St. Louis, Missouri is Area Representative replacing Sister Mary Alene, S.S.N.D.

Mr. Hugh Fitzgerald, Quincy College, is the College Theatre Consultant.

Brother Dunstan, C.S.C., Cathedral High School, Indianapolis, Ind., is the NCTC Representative to ITI.

Sister Mary Consilia, IHM, Queen of Angels High School, and Sister Marie Fleurette, ILHML, Immaculate Heart College, are Co-chairmen of the Los Angeles Area.

Father Brennan, Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit is Chairman of the Seminary Group.

With the Editors . . .

READ THIS — AND WRITE —

NCTC has now arrived at the stalwart age of twenty years. Hindsight and Foresights are the matters of the moment. Where have we been and where are we going—that straight-angle view of Catholic Theatre USA will undoubtedly be much in evidence at the Kansas City meeting in June.

"Until that day, people, until that great day," how would you like to toss this idea around? This is what it is:

What do you think about a quarterly publication—an NCTC Drama Journal—to replace the present monthly Bulletin—and a mimeographed months newsletter to keep us in touch "between quarters." The journal might be similar to Britain's *Drama* magazine and perhaps not so large as *Educational Theatre Journal*.

Shall we hear from you on this score? The idea is not the brain-child of this editor! Father Hartke, O.P., of Catholic University, dreamed the dream at least two years ago.

You did say you would write your thoughts, yes?

Sister Honora, O.P.
Saint Catherine's, Racine.

A MARY PRODUCTION ONE ACT PLAY "ST. NICHOLAS AND THE CROWN"

This is the story about St. Nicholas, who was the Bishop of Myra in the 4th century is told in a new one act play written for Mary Productions by Mary-Eunice Sayrahrder.

There are seven in the cast, five male, two female. It is one half hour in length, and has one simple setting. (Interior)

St. Nicholas practiced the virtue of generosity among other virtues, and his good example encouraged others to do likewise, especially in the giving of gifts at Christmas-time with the proper spirit of generosity.

Perhaps the knowledge and inspiration in the simple stories of goodness may help many in the world today to get away from the sensational commercialism which is practiced in various places, and to encourage the virtue of generosity with the spirit of sacrifice.

Let us pray that more people, who have been blessed with the worldly goods give their gifts with the true spirit of generosity and tell the story of St. Nicholas to children (and adults who don't know it as yet) . . . so that when children grow up they will know that "Santa Claus" is not a fable, but that "Santa" is real and that he lives in the hearts of all those who give with the spirit of St. Nicholas.

For information about this play and others, please contact Mary Productions, 100 Randolph Ave., Dumont 2, N.J.



MOPPET THEATRE

Three performances of four plays, a result of classes in general speech improvement, interpretative speech, creative dramatics, and phases of approved Educational Theatre practice will be offered for a limited number of children by the Children's Educational Theatre of Maryland.

Plays to be produced this season will be drawn from the following list:

FLIBBERTYGIBBET—a Scotch fantasy, by Nort Tully Macalvey and Charlotte Corpenning.

THE RHEINGOLD MAIDENS—a child's version of *Das Rheingold*.

GRACIEUSE AND PERCINET—and original version from the French, by Madame D'Alnoy.

HOCUS POCUS—a new play for children by George Baehr.

PINOCCHIO—dramatized version of the story by the Italian, Carlo Lorenzini.

Dates for children's productions are: December 15 and 16, 1956; February 2, 3, 1957; March 30, 31, 1957; May 25, 26, 1957. The staff includes: Ruthye Sharpiro, general assistant, Janet Feinblatt Elby, technical advisor, and Frances Cary Bowen, Executive Director.

NCTC Convention

Kansas City, Missouri

June, 1957

Community Corner

THANKSGIVING!

In honor of All the Saints and all the Holy Souls let us give thanks!

It happened!

We got an answer!

First Independent, Adult, Parish or Community Theatre Group to answer our plea for introductory data: *Mary Productions!*

For the sake of simplicity, in this column from now on every time we say COMMUNITY Theatre we mean to refer to all Independent Adult Groups. That is, if you are too big to be Moppet, too old to be Teen, and too long-gone from any educational institution to be Collegiate . . . got the idea?

So, our general term COMMUNITY in this column means to refer to every group affiliated with NCTC which is not an educational or institutional theatre but a Parish or Community group. Okay? Any Questions? Amen.

So although *Mary Productions* may not be a COMMUNITY THEATRE in the strictest terms, for the purpose of this Column it is, as is any group, professional or not, including Blackfriars Guilds, the Rochester gang, the Evansville bunch, the King Players of Haddonfield, N. J., my own crazy crew and all of us! (Who, by the way, are beginning to monopolize the Bulletin, Bob Smett had the front page in the September Issue and *Mary Productions* had the back page—those college and high school groups better get busy before we outshine them!).

Now to introduce one of our "COMMUNITY" THEATRE GROUPS affiliated with NCTC:

In this issue we want you to get to know *Mary Productions* and from their interesting story we think you can get a few useful ideas in your own field of Catholic Theatre Work. The folks at *Mary Production's* headquarters are wonderful people and anxious to help you in any way they can. Feel free to write them.

Mary Productions is a drama guild dedicated to Mary, and organized for the spreading of Marian messages in the field of communications, such as the stage, radio, television, films, and publications. The group not only puts on plays, but originates scripts and sends them out to interested groups all over the world. "Marian plays" have been produced in Africa, India, Australia, England, Philippine Islands, Hawaii, South America, and the United States. They term Marian plays not only those about Mary, but any play stressing the virtues she and Her Son love; purity, humility, charity. Plays with wholesome humor, where virtues overshadow vices, where there are the three elements of laughter, education, and inspiration, which make for good wholesome entertainment. *Mary Productions* have always felt that the audience ought to be made to laugh, to learn, and to be spiritually uplifted. All of its members are volunteers, whether they are actors or engaged in backstage or clerical chores. Many of the actors

have had training in dramatics or experience in the professional theatre; others are getting their first experiences with the group. They are open to all . . . regardless of race, color, or creed . . . but under Catholic Control. Their board consists of Father Doino, S.J., who gave them initial encouragement and loaned them his hall when he was pastor of Nativity Church in New York City; Father Roger Charest, S.M.M., editor of *Queen of All Hearts* magazine; Father Francis Tomai, S.M.M.; and Father Marian, S.S.P., film director for the Society of St. Paul. The group was founded six years ago by Mary-Eunice Sayrahder. Anyone interested in knowing more about *Mary Productions* may contact their business manager, Joseph H. Spagnola, 100 Randolph Avenue, Dumont 2, New Jersey.

Well, we hope we hear from another group soon. Getting acquainted with the various COMMUNITY Groups in NCTC will help you to get a few new useful ideas. Always feel free to send in handy notions and suggestions for the COMMUNITY CORNER. Bob Smett had a fine suggestion in the September issue—get your own theatre! Wow! But he is right! We worked in the CYO hall for five years and fought constant "traffic" problems; this year we are renovating a little second-hand furniture store to be all our own. Amen.

Send your own COMMUNITY Theatre story and ideas to Father Anthony Zoghby, Mobile Theatre Guild, P.O. Box 20, Mobile, Alabama.

We need a good turnover of interesting data for this COMMUNITY CORNER. So write to us!

"ANASTASIA"

The Mobile Theatre Guild will present *Anastasia*, the romantic riddle of modern history, fresh from Broadway, with famous "Recognition Scene" which made Theatre History, on November 14, 15 and 16.

THEATRE GROUP OPENS SEASON WITH PAUL CLAUDEL CLASSIC

Catholic Theatre of Rochester presented its first production of the current season, Paul Claudel's *Tidings Brought To Mary*, on October 12, 13 and 14. The production was given in the group's newly acquired auditorium at Holy Redeemer Church, Clifford Avenue. Wilford Scott directed and Carl Zollo did the settings and lights.

Author of the play, the late Paul Claudel, was at one time French ambassador to the U.S. He won great renown as a poet, dramatist and essayist and was elected to the French Academy in 1946. He died last year.

Cast of *Tidings Brought To Mary* included: Robert Bride, Mary Mikell Clark, Edward Hannan, Arloha McVinnie, Ronald Pedrone, Rosemary Petrossi, Jean Strachan and Herb Yates.

Strictly Teen

"APPRENTICE-WISE"

by JOAN PLUNKETT

McDonell Memorial High School
Chippewa Falls, Wis.

I like seeing things from the inside out, and this summer I had, not only the opportunity to see things from the inside out, but from the bottom up, as an apprentice with a summer theatre group.

My name is Joan Plunkett, the group: Players Inc., and the spot: St. Michael's Playhouse, Winooski Park, Vermont—right between the Adirondacks and the Green Mountains. The Playhouse is on the campus of St. Michael's College. The season started July 1st and I arrived that Sunday full of expectations. I hadn't the slightest idea what to expect. I had read, of course, many accounts of summer stock, but somehow the nearer I came to my destination, the hazier my mental pictures grew.

My home for the seven weeks I spent there, was in St. Patrick's dorm, a "re-arranged" army barracks. Once we got settled, the schedule we followed ran pretty much like this: two morning classes from 8:30 to 10:30. The classes alternated with acting class and theatre production one day, oral interpretation and stagecraft the next. At 10:30 A.M. we "adjourned" to the theatre for morning rehearsal until noon. The rosary was scheduled for 12:45 P.M. and at 1.00 P.M. afternoon rehearsals began. At 5:00 P.M. rehearsals stopped and we had dinner, recreation . . . presumably to rest, but we usually played a wild, hectic game of volley ball. At 6:30 P.M. clean-up started (at this time we cleaned the whole house, backstage, porch, dressing rooms, and even the black-top in front of the playhouse.)

8:30 P.M. was curtain time. There was a play on every night and a different play every week. The plays we did were: *Father of The Bride*, *Dial M for Murder*, *My Sister Eileen*, *The Late George Apley*, *The Rainmaker*, *You Can't Take It With You*, and an original children's play done with an all-apprentice cast, *Sunshine for The Queen*.

As soon as an audience left in the evening, we moved the first rows of chairs back and chalked an area, then set up for the next morning's rehearsal for next week's play. If it was Saturday, "strike night," the whole set on stage was torn down, the stage mopped, and a new set erected all that night. The finishing touches were added the next day.

An apprentice's duties included work on the technical crew, i.e., making flats, painting them, re-arranging flats, taking them apart . . . anything and everything connected

with producing a new set for the next play; backstage work: props, lights, sound; acting as an assistant stage manager, director's side, in box office, costumes. Sometimes an apprentice tried for available parts in the plays. The parts I had were nothing spectacular, in fact most people probably never noticed my sparkling interpretation of a giggling teenager passing by or my small girl playing hopscotch in the play *My Sister Eileen*. My walk on parts necessitated a couple of quick changes. I had to change from pigtails and freckles to bobbed hair and lipstick . . . then back again. Although my on stage time wouldn't set any records, I learned how to get in and out of makeup quickly. I had one full-length part, that of the astronomer in *Sunshine For The Queen*. This was a delightful experience in children's theatre.

After my weeks at St. Michael's were over I had a perfect ending to a perfect summer . . . several days in New York and the opportunity to see two Broadway shows: *The Most Happy Fella* and *Diary of Ann Frank*.

St. Louis Group News

The High School NCTC Group in the St. Louis Area, now in its third year of existence has elected John Faust of St. Louis University High School as President, Pat Craig of Notre Dame High as Vice-President, Mary Frances Henniger of the Academy; of the Visitation, Recording Secretary, and Kay Kohler of Ursuline Academy, Corresponding Secretary.

The Student Council group consisting of two representatives from each member school met on October 6 to set up a tentative schedule for activities of the coming year. They include a Holy Hour to open the season and to obtain God's blessing on all the undertakings of the club. Various work-shops will be held in which professional and college student demonstrations in make-up, blocking, directing, play reading and other subjects will be presented for the benefit of the High School NCTC Group. Sponsoring these activities will be one of the projects of the College Group. Member schools may also act as host to the entire club and put on a one-act play, or a cutting from another play, after which there will be discussions.

Sister M. Celestine, C.P.P.S., will act as moderator for this group.

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What? When? Where?

Oh, Father! a comedy in three acts by William Ellis Jones, will be presented by the Masque and Gavel Players of Mother of Mercy High School, Cincinnati, Ohio, on November 4 and 5. Sister Mary Carlos, R.S.M., is the director.

* * *

Lois McGovern tells us that the Academy of the Holy Angels, Minneapolis, Minnesota, presented the Junior Genesians in *Jack and the Beanstalk* on November 1 and 3, for the surrounding South Minneapolis grade schools. The Senior Genesians will present *Little Women* the week-end of November 25.

* * *

Word from McDonell Memorial High School tells us that the new officers of the Sock and Buskin Club took over: President, Dolores La Faive; Vice-President, James Hibbard; Secretary, Jane Sazama; Treasurer, Robert Bell. A committee of members drafted a new point system to determine ratings for coveted end-of-the-year awards in drama. Members decided to do a scene, book-in-hand, at each meeting as a basis for discussion. Two have already been presented: *She Stoops To Conquer* by Goldsmith and Shaw's *St. Joan*. The records of *My Fair Lady* were on the agenda for the first meeting. Two members did a research project on the Greek drama.

Eight delegates accompanied Sister Mary Susan, S.S.N.D., to the NCTC Central Regional Convention at Mount Mary in Milwaukee. They resumed weekly telecasts over WEAU-TV and inaugurated a weekly radio program over WCHF this month. McDonell will do *The Tempest* by Shakespeare in early February. Drama students have begun a study of the play and reasearch for costumes and sets.

* * *

Sister M. Ambrosine, Sacred Heart Academy, Wichita, Kansas, announces that the Academy drama club will join the College in the presentation of *Song of the Scaffold* in November. The Academy group will also do *Fatima Calls*, an adapted version of the story for a semi-musical production.

* * *

Christian Brothers High School, St. Louis, announces that Brother Louis Timothy, the new director of dramatics, plans to put on a number of One-Act Plays this year. Brother says his Dramatic Club will take part in the annual NCTC Play Festival.

* * *

Marquette High School, Alton, Illinois, presented *Round The Clock with Claire* in late October. The production was student-directed and produced.

* * *

Mercy High School, St. Louis, is working on an original musical comedy to be presented in early December. On October 10 there was a show for old members. New members were initiated on October 25. Father Raymond Rustige,

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Director, was recently elected President of the C.I.S.L. Congratulations, Father!

* * *

Bishop DuBourg High School, St. Louis, has introduced dramatics for Freshmen, Sophs, Juniors as well as Seniors this year for the first time. One hundred thirty-nine students registered for the classes to be held after school. They will present a three-act play possibly in December in addition to the annual musical given on the out-door stage in the Spring. *Love Is Eternal* has been chosen for the first production, but the musical has not been definitely selected, although *Student Prince*, *Show Boat*, or *Carousel* all have a strong appeal.

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Murder In The Cathedral

by SISTER MARY OLIVE, S.P.

(Note: This article is based on a performance of the play seen in Ludlow Parish Church and on a visit to Canterbury Cathedral made by the author while studying in Europe this past summer.)

"Unbar the door! Unbar the door!
We are not here to triumph by fighting . . .
We have fought the beast
And have conquered. We have only to conquer
Now, by suffering. This is the easier victory.
Now is the triumph of the Cross, now
Open the door! I command it. OPEN THE DOOR!

Reluctantly obedient, the priests went down the aisles and unbarred the very doors we had entered when we came into Ludlow Parish Church that evening. Thomas a Becket stood on a platform in front of the choir screen and defied the drunken knights who sought to kill him. Behind him two great curtains hanging from the center arch of the nave were parted and, at the far end of the church beyond the high altar, bright English twilight illuminated the stained glass windows. As the Archbishop left the platform to go into the choir, the Knights followed him down the steps and killed him just out of our sight. The Ludlow church bell rang out in sudden alarm above our heads as we, the congregation, sat aghast at what we had seen. When the murderers returned to the platform, the purple curtains closed behind them. Their rationalization of the "suicide while of unsound mind" was far more effective when directed to a congregation in a fully lighted church than it ever is when done on a stage. We were indeed "eye-witnesses of the lamentable scene" and the scene was made more "lamentable" because of the place wherein we sat. This production of *Murder in the Cathedral* by T. S. Eliot was the first I had ever seen performed in a church.

THE CHURCH AT LUDLOW

The church at Ludlow, begun in the eleventh and completed in the fifteenth century, is one of the largest parish churches in England, seating two thousand people. Although this number was of necessity reduced when the center portion of the nave was converted into a stage, all the seats reserved for the audience were taken every night during the two weeks run of the play. The director, Mr. Eric Salmon, made only two additions to the existing structure of the church to prepare it for a theatrical performance. He hung the purple curtains above the choir screen, not as an act curtain, but to be used for dramatic effect when the Archbishop entered his cathedral. He built a four-foot-high platform with steps leading directly up to it from the center aisle, and down from it on the other side into the choir. This platform extended from the pulpit on stage to a flight of circular steps around the column supporting the nave on stage left.

THE CHORUS

The chorus of the Women of Canterbury used the circular steps during their movement. The planning of this movement and the general grouping of the chorus was not pictorial and far too static. However, their reading and interpretation of the lines, both individually and as a choir, was very fine. But in two places the sound effects blotted out the words of the chorus. At the opening of the play when the women entered, their first speech could not be heard distinctly because the offstage chanting of the monks was too loud and too clear. The sudden ringing of the church bell at the moment of Thomas' death was most effective. But when the chorus started the famous speech "Clear the air! Clean the sky! Wash the wind!" the bell continued to be rung during more than half of the speech. This unfortunately drowned out some of Eliot's most beautiful poetry.

The doubling of the Four Tempters and the Four Knights was done at Ludlow even as it was when the play was first presented. The symbolic use of the same actors in both roles should be employed every time the play is given. Eric Salmon went a step further in the Ludlow performance, dressing the Fourth Tempter as Thomas was dressed and having him appear above the choir-screen just over Thomas' head. Even as a knight he resembled Thomas more than the others, as if he were closer to the true Thomas than they.

AN INTERLUDE

Eliot wrote an interlude to be used when the play was made into a motion picture. This scene follows the Christmas sermon and is in the nature of a processional. The three priests enter vested, carrying banners, and chanting in English, sections of the Office for the three days following Christmas. Eric Salmon used this interlude in the Ludlow performance. It is a dramatic device indicating the lapse of time from Christmas to the day of the martyrdom which is now the feast of St. Thomas a Becket. This scene is another feature of the play that was more effective in a church than on a stage.

The role of the Archbishop was excellently portrayed by the young English actor, John Westbrook. He has appeared in radio and television and has played several notable parts on the stage. He brought to the role a youthful vigor and a manliness that revealed certain facets of the character that are usually obscured. When Robert Speaght played the part, he gave a great dignity and a solemn interpretation to the lines, as if "Becket, the Cheapside brat," had been born a saint. In John Westbrook's reading the references to Thomas' lusty youth and the strength of the First Tempter were much more believable. There was less of the theatrical and more of the sincere in the Ludlow Archbishop. However, Mr. Salmon's attempt to show Thomas in glory by parting the purple cur-

(Continued on page fourteen.)

Regional Reports

(Continued from page three.)

High, The Academy of the Visitation, Christian Brothers High and De Andreis High.

Schools joining and sending representatives for the first time were: St. Mary's High, McBride High, and St. John's High. High Schools now enrolled in NCTC in this area number twenty-three.

St. Louis University and Maryville College were represented at this first meeting.

An important feature of the assembly was the election of local officers. Sr. M. Jeanine, B.V.M., of Xavier High succeeds Sr. M. Celestine, C.P.P.S., as Local Co-Chairman, and Sr. Marita, S.L., De Andreis High takes over the office of Secretary Treasurer held by Sr. Clara Joseph, C.S.J.

Many important plans concerning activities for the coming year were discussed, and will be brought out in later issues of the paper.

* * * *

CENTRAL REGION: Chairman Sister M. Susan, S.S.N.D., McDonell Memorial High, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, reporting—Drama directors in the LaCrosse Diocese met at Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, during the annual Diocesan Teachers' Convention to listen to Brother James Luke of St. Mary's Winona, speak on radio and television.

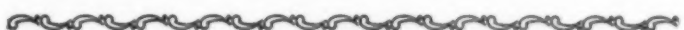
October 5 and 6 was the Central Regional Convention at Mount Mary College in Milwaukee. Over 300 delegates attended a business meeting conducted by Sister Mary Susan, regional chairman, on October 6. On October 7, Sister M. Angelita, President of NCTC, conducted a directors' meeting at Holy Angels' Academy, Milwaukee. It was principally a shop-talk session.

The Chicago One-Act Play Festival will be held Thanksgiving weekend.

* * * *

MID-ATLANTIC REGION: Co-chairman Robert Smett, Catholic Courier Journal, Rochester, N. Y., reporting—Nazareth College's Speech Assembly of Rochester, will present Frank Carney's *The Righteous Are Bold* on November 30 and December 1. Alan A. Stambusky, Jr., of the college Speech and Drama Department, is director.

Rochester's Music Theatre gave two performances of *Wish You Were Here* on September 29 in Eaton Auditorium, Toronto, Ontario. Casting is now in progress for a New Year's Eve production of *Plain and Fancy* in the local Auditorium Theatre, according to Miss Noreen Carey, director. Mr. Thomas McCarthy is producer and Miss Suzanne Wigg, music director and conductor.



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The new Nazareth Academy Dramatic Club announces 300 members, according to Sister M. St. Gertrude, S.S.J., director. Emmet Lavery's *Murder in the Nunnery* will be performed on November 21, 22 and 23.

The Thespians of Our Lady of Mercy High School, Rochester, produced Besier's *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* on October 25 and 26. Director was Sister Mary Pius, R.S.M.

The Dramatics Society of McQuaid Jesuit High School of Rochester will produce *Stalag 17* on November 28 and 30. Director is the Reverend John Farrand, S.J.

Profile

(Continued from page three.)

He maintains that: "Only when we have convinced our building planners that dramatics is an art which calls for specialized architecture and specialized equipment can we hope to produce artistic dramatic productions worthy of a tradition as old as man." He says, "Our Catholic students, like all Americans, spend a great portion of their time in theatres, watching T.V., listening to radios, but there is seldom any provision made in their educational program to help them prepare for positions in this ever growing field, or to develop in them through actual experience and participation a critical attitude as to what constitutes the dramatic art at its best. For an art which is the summary of literature, life, music, painting, and the other involved arts and crafts, drama is sadly neglected."

Fourteen years in sunny "Cal" seems to have been enough for the first "round"; Brother Dunstan has been re-assigned to Indianapolis. This trip features the "annual" in addition to his multitudinous other duties!

NCTC President Sister Mary Angelita, BVM, has recently appointed the versatile and humorous Brother to the important post of official NCTC representative to the International Theatre Institute (ITI).

What we almost forgot to mention is this: Brother Dunstan is a first rate artist AND we have "heard" that raising camellias (or is it gardenias?) is a most enterprising hobby of his.

Children's Theatre

(Continued from page one.)

ing to study hard would receive free instruction in dramatic art. Some 400 children signed for the classes in Speech and Action, a course which included training in pantomime, dramatization, voice and diction, characterization, and interpretation. From the factories and sweat shops came scores of young people clamoring for evening classes. And everybody knew that the course of instruction would culminate in the production of a play. Then, somewhere in the rush and excitement of organizing groups of youngsters and young adults into classes, Alice Herts and her stage manager, Jacob Heniger, both in love with the theatre they were founding, found themselves in love with each other. Theirs was a simple wedding and a splendid marriage.

Although Alice Heniger had not yet, perhaps, crystallized all her own thinking in regard to the educational possibilities of the new program, she was definite about the values of the play which she would choose to do for the first venture. The play must have direct reference to the needs of the neighborhood; it must incorporate, to some degree at least, the particular lessons needed by the class in training; it must be suitable for childhood; it must present an ordered picture of ideals for this East Side civilization.

SHAKESPEARE PRESENTED

The choice fell finally to *THE TEMPEST* of William Shakespeare! In an interview with Mrs. Heniger some four years later, I. G. Moses, Drama critic for *Review of Reviews*, recorded the specific reasons for her choice: *The Tempest* presented love and nobility of character; it dealt with the human problem of toleration, the lack of which was destroying understanding between these immigrant parents and their children.

When the play was announced, libraries for miles around were unable to supply the demand for copies. This, incidentally, was the very first play ever to be done both in the English language and in the English tradition east of the Bowery!

Under the direction of Alice Heniger, the play was studied as a whole, then the various scenes were studied in detail. The young folks could study any part which appealed to them. Mrs. Fry was busy training the classes in voice and diction; doing original little dramatizations involving the situations and characters as an aid to understanding both the characters and the story; the exercises in pantomime all revolved around *The Tempest*.

At length, after weeks and months of studying and

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analyzing the play, and of creating the characters, the final assignment of roles was made by a vote of the young people themselves, subject to the approval of the management. Several actors were assigned to each part and to each production job so that no one was burdened, and everyone was actively participating.

Even in this first play, every conceivable opportunity for indirect teaching was utilized: the play was studied with reference to its literary and dramatic merit; motives governing the characters were analyzed and considered; the behaviour of characters was analyzed, and comparisons were drawn between characters; whenever possible, ethical principles involved in the behavior of characters was discussed; voice and diction merited special consideration and training; punctuality, docility, co-operation were virtues particularly stressed. The young people designed and constructed their own sets and costumes under the direction of Alice and Jacob Heniger.

THE PLAY—A SUCCESS

The play electrified the neighborhood. Every performance played to a full house. (Strauss auditorium seated about 800.) During the run, over a thousand copies of an inexpensive edition of the play were sold within the neighborhood. *The Tempest* was dramatized in the homes and on the streets in the evenings; it was talked about on the doorsteps and in the factories.

Humble immigrants, who daily trundled their pushcarts through the alleys or worked in the sweatshops, proved themselves quite capable—with a little guidance—of response to the humanistic appeal of great drama. Their greatest joy was, perhaps, the realization that this was entirely their own production.

Alice Heniger's "baby" had a healthy birth!

The playbill for the next four seasons included a premiere production of Frances Hodgson Burnett's play, *The Little Princess*, dramatized from her novel *SARA CREWE*. This play was destined to rate in popularity with *The Tempest* and with *Snow White*, dramatized at the Alliance from the German fairy tale which was comparatively unknown in the United States at that time. *As You Like It*,

(Continued on page fifteen.)

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Convention Program

(Continued from page four.)

- 10:00 A.M. General Session—College Theatre.
CHORAL SPEAKING: ITS VALUES AND TECHNIQUE, Agnes Curran Hamm, Mount Mary College, Milwaukee. Demonstration: Notre Dame Candidates.
 Director: Sister M. Lenore, SSND.
 Chairman: Therese Marie Cuny, Longwood Academy and Providence High School, Chicago.
- 11:00 A.M. Play: **PULLMAN CAR, HIAWATHA**—Thornton Wilder, St. Benedict High School, Chicago.
 Director: Sister M. Judine, OSF.
- 11:30 A.M. Discussion of play: Chairman—Miss Anna Helen Reuter, Alvernia and Immaculata High Schools, Chicago.
- 12:00 Noon Luncheon—Caroline Hall.

Saturday afternoon, October 6: —College Theatre

- 1:15 P.M. Spanish morality play: **THE WORLD IS A STAGE**—Calderon.
 Presented with permission of the translator, Professor Singleton, University of Wisconsin, Edgewood High School, Madison, Wisconsin.
 Director: Sister M. Thomas More, O.P.
- 2:00 P.M. Discussion of play: Chairman—Dr. Sherwood Collins, University of Wisconsin, Madison.
- 2:30 P.M. Lecture Recital: **THEY SAID IT WELL**, Dr. Loren LaMont Okey, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
 Chairman: Brother Dunstan, CSC, Cathedral High School, Indianapolis, Indiana.
- 3:15 P.M. Short Recess.
- 3:30 P.M. Symposium on Scenic Design.
DESIGN FOR ACTING: The Designer's Role in the Theatre, Gerald Ritholz, member, The United Scenic Artists of America.
- 4:15 P.M. **THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DESIGNER: As a Catholic and as an Educator**—Mr. William Fossier, Wilding Motion Pictures, Chicago.
- 4:45 P.M. Discussion: Chairman—Mr. James Spitz, Messmer High School, Milwaukee.
- 5:15 P.M. Lyrics from the musical comedy, **THE COMPLAINING ANGEL**, by Natalie White. With special permission of the authors. Words by John Tumpane, music by Dudley Birder.
 "All Nuns Do Is Pray," "Arkansas," "Bucking for Saint-hood," "Our Lady of the Grotto."
 Sung by a Quartette, Mount Mary College.
 Narrator: Sister Mary Roman, SSND.
- 6:00 P.M. Dinner—Caroline Hall.

Saturday evening, October 6:

- 6:45 P.M. Business Meeting: **CENTRAL REGION** members—Library.
 Regional Chairman: Sister Mary Susan, SSND, McDonell Memorial High School, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin.



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- 8:00 P.M. Play: **ANASTASIA**—Maurette and Bolton, Mount Mary College Players.
 Director: S. Woodward Lister.
- 10:15 P.M. Refreshments and Social in Caroline Hall.
 Directors in Social Hall.
 Students in Gymnasium.
- Sunday morning, October 7:**
 9:00 A.M. Meeting for all Drama Directors, Holy Angels Academy, 1218 W. Kilbourn Ave., near Gesu Church.
 Chairman: Sister M. Angelita, BVM.

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Murder in the Cathedral

(Continued from page ten.)

tains after the final speech of the choir and revealing St. Thomas standing high above the choir screen was a false note that weakened the ending.

A VIVID EXPERIENCE

Several weeks later, when I walked under Christ Church Gate and saw the south-west wall of Canterbury Cathedral before me, I was whispering "Here let us stand, close by the cathedral. Here let us wait. What danger can come to us, the poor, the poor women of Canterbury?" Within the cathedral I tried to imagine how the first production of *Murder in the Cathedral* was presented in the Canterbury Festival of 1935. If the play was emotionally moving in Ludlow Parish Church, how much more powerful it must have been when given at Canterbury itself. The great nave would have seated a tremendous audience. The two flights of steps with a landing between them leading up from the nave to the choir was a perfect formalistic stage setting. The choir screen with its door through which the windows of Trinity Chapel can be seen in the distance was a splendid background. All the scenes of the play could be beautifully staged there. The grouping of the chorus of the Women of Canterbury would be much more effective there than at Ludlow. The breadth, height, and length of the cathedral itself would have added to the grandeur of the presentation. But the audience must have been almost overwhelmed by the tremendous knowledge that the murder really took place in the very cathedral where the play was being given.

The actual spot where the Archbishop was murdered is in a side chapel now called the Martyrdom. Thomas had entered it by the door from the cloister and was murdered as he started for the steps to the choir. The point of Le Breton's sword, broken off in the struggle, was kept as a relic in the Altar of the Sword's Point which stood in the Martyrdom until it was destroyed by order of Henry VIII. In Chaucer's day the pilgrims still entered the church by the southwest porch, venerated the spot where the saint was killed, then climbed the steps to the Shrine in Trinity Chapel, behind the high altar. The Shrine was "a masterpiece of medieval art, consisting of a gold-plated coffin mounted on a feretory supported by marble pillars." The coffin was always covered with precious objects left there by grateful pilgrims.

The saint had been buried in the Crypt after his death but his remains were translated to the Shrine in 1220 and remained there until the Shrine was desecrated by Henry VIII who took its treasure for his personal use. The only thing left to indicate the place and size of the Shrine is the worn depression in the floor made by the countless pilgrims who knelt around the tomb. Between the Shrine and the high altar is a magnificent marble pavement brought back from the Crusades which is also marred by the feet of the pilgrims. Today it has been roped off to protect it from the feet of sightseers!

"For wherever a martyr has given his blood
for the blood of Christ,
There is holy ground, and the sanctity shall
not depart from it
Though armies trample over it, though sightseers
come with guide-books looking over it;
From such ground springs that which forever
renews the earth
Though it is forever denied."

The cathedrals of Canterbury, York, and Lincoln, the parish churches of Ludlow and Stratford-upon-Avon, the abbeys of Melrose and Tintern, the solitary Gothic arch standing in the field at Walsingham, what a tale they tell of royal lust defying God, deliberately depriving its people of the grace that is life-giving. How lonely these ruins, how empty these churches, where once the Real Presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ was worshipped. What blindness prevents an Anglican from recognizing the Way that is Truth and Life when he is seated in a church built by his Catholic ancestors in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, listening to Eliot's sublime words, and seeing re-enacted the martyrdom of Thomas a Becket who chose to obey God's law rather than the whim of a royal potentate? How can Eliot himself not have convinced himself with his own words:

"First Priest: The Church lies bereft.

Alone, desecrated, desolated, and the heathen shall
build on the ruins,

Their world without God. I see it. I see it.

Third Priest: No. For the Church is stronger for
this action.

Triumphant in adversity. It is fortified

By persecution: supreme, so long as men will die for it.
Let our thanks ascend

To God, who has given us another Saint in Canterbury."

SPECIAL TO YOU WHO PUT SHOWS AWAY

You won't forget to write up that Production Sheet on the "just-finished" show you are still feeling good about, will you?

Good shows, happy discoveries in scripts, new ideas in staging, all need to be shared with the family, remember. You, YOU, the individual director, have something very fine to offer to your Conference confreres. Yes, they do too want to know what *you* did with your show!

Send production sheets in at any time, directly to Columbus. They will be published. Your editors are especially interested in production sheets of plays for children—thus far we have not one for this area of interest.

A THOUGHT TO REMEMBER . . .

"People working together can do anything."

Children's Theatre

(Continued from page twelve.)

Ingomar, The Forest Ring, Little Lord Fauntleroy completed the bill of oft-repeated plays—that is, until the distinguished gentleman who had watched *The Little Princess* with Mrs. Burnett added to the Alliance repertory his own dramatization of one of his best stories. The gentleman was Samuel Clemens; the play, *The Prince And The Pauper*, which opened the 1907 season.

Clemens' play ran the routine of preparation for production: reading, study, character analysis, informal dramatizations of the story, pantomime, voice and diction training; and wound up with four complete casts and production staffs, including the design and construction of sets and costumes, as well as all phases of business administration.

Present for the opening of *THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER* were Author Samuel Clemens, William Dean Howells, Dr. Charles Eliot of Harvard, Dr. G. Stanley Hall of Clarke, Brander Matthews of Columbia, and George Pierce Baker of Harvard. The latter two had written program notes for the occasion! And for the first time in its young life, the little four-year-old theatre received public notice!

So pleased was Mr. Clemens with the Alliance production of his play that he promptly assumed the role of "angel." Through his efforts, the theatre was incorporated late that same year. He himself became the first President, and the Board of Directors listed such estimable names as those of Percy G. Grant, Robert J. Collier, and G. Stanley Hall.

THE PRESS RESPONDS

The periodical press did its share towards making known this unique venture. Perhaps the best advertisement, however, was a contest sponsored by a large New York daily newspaper. The paper offered a cash prize for the best answer to the question, "What is the biggest bargain in this city?" The contest ran for several days. A little girl won with this answer: "The biggest bargain in this city is a ticket to the Children's Theatre, ten cents."

But the Sunday Laws were soon to make their pressures felt. Many of the children were not available for performances at any time other than Sunday; this was particularly true of the young people who worked in the factories. Alice Heniger then inaugurated a series of Saturday evening plays with older casts for more mature audiences, but the attempt failed of its purpose.

Mr. Clemens and his distinguished Board of Directors made every effort to save the little children's theatre. A revival of *Little Princess* was trouped to uptown New York, to Brooklyn, and even to Boston. Percy Mackaye lectured and wrote, appealing for endowment for what he called "the only agency in America dedicated to the task of educating the imaginations of men and women at the crucial time of childhood and early youth."

Later that same year 1909, *Harper's Bazaar* devoted two pages to an appreciation of the Alliance theatre. Drama critic O. H. Dunbar outdid himself on the review, but time had run out. Just one month previously, Alice Heniger had been forced to close her theatre. Dunbar's closing comment on the impact of the little Jewish theatre upon the city of New York was this:

"Uptown theatre managers applaud loudly across the exceedingly wide gulf that separates their enterprises from this; and educators in New York and elsewhere are acquiring the uneasy conviction that Alice Heniger's skill has captured a precious something that has somehow slipped through the rusty meshes of their 'methods.'"

Interesting, nevertheless, are the few statistics available on the Alliance theatre. In an average year, the theatre presented forty Sunday matinees for children, and fifteen evening performances for adults, counting an average audience attendance of about 45,000 per year. This average prevailed over a four-year period. Thousands of complimentary tickets were given to charitable organizations and to probation courts. Regular admissions were ten cents. Each performance averaged about eighty-eight dollars in expense. The Alliance allotted \$4100 annually to the project. In those same years, over five hundred members of the classes in "Speech and Action" performed one or more times in the productions.

That is the story of Alice Heniger's Alliance theatre. In 1915, when the Educational Alliance celebrated its Twenty-fifth Anniversary, Alice Heniger and the experiment which rocked the educational and theatrical worlds were both so well forgotten that not a single mention is made of either in the very complete Anniversary book; nor is any account of the project to be found in the detailed listing of Alliance achievements over those years. Alice Heniger's name appears in its alphabetical place in the long list of sustaining members of the Educational Alliance. That is all . . . unless, of course, one observes Children's Theatre USA in the present decade. The story has something of a "little lost Dauphin" flavor.

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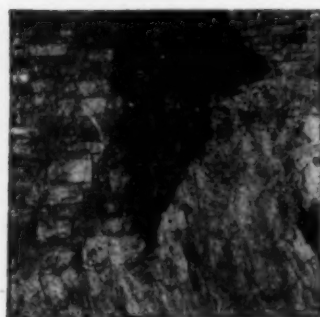


Step 3 When object is completely covered with "Celastic" and thoroughly dry slit the "Celastic" with razor and remove the "Celastic" shell.



Step 4 Here is "Celastic" head, removed from the model which was originally covered with tinfoil. Finish by taping slit with strips of "Celastic."

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